



south ayrshire
health & social care
partnership

Quality Assurance Framework for Commissioned Services



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INTRODUCTION

The aspiration to deliver high-quality social care services is a shared responsibility for both South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership (SAHSCP) and the services we commission. This Quality Assurance document sets out both the framework and the intelligence-based approach we will implement to provide the SAHSCP with assurance that our commissioned services are providing high quality care and support on a consistent basis.

PURPOSE

This document and our quality assurance function is applicable to all SAHSCP commissioned services across both Adult and Children's services. We are committed to working collaboratively with all our commissioned services with a clear purpose to improve the quality of life for individuals who receive care and support. To achieve this goal, we will develop and build on our established working relationships with all of our commissioned providers with the shared objective of delivering high-quality care and support services being. If we gather evidence or receive feedback that indicates any aspect of the social care being delivered does not meet the required standards, we will work directly with the service and when necessary any other relevant professionals to identify, implement and monitor any required improvements.

Social Care services are delivered across a range of settings and across the lifespan from children to adults; as a result, the role and responsibilities can differ with regards to many aspects of service delivery. However, there are commonalities across all health and care services and these include the requirement to deliver health and social care support in line with the National Health and Social Care Standards (NHSCS) (2018).

The NHSCS are relevant for all health and social care service provision and they include a framework for delivering high quality, care and support for individuals, their families and carers. The standards are underpinned by a human rights-based approach and set out what can be expected by individuals, their families and carers when using health, social care or social work services across Scotland.

The objective of having Care Standards is to drive improvement, promote flexibility and encourage innovation in how care and supports are delivered. In practice, the application of the standards across all commissioned services will ensure consistency in the quality of care being provided. The standards can also be used as a framework for how to achieve and evidence the delivery of high-quality care and support. The SAHSCP will adopt the NHSCS as our outcome framework around which we will gather evidence to achieve and implement our quality assurance function with all commissioned services.

The standards set out five headline outcome statements and these are:

- 1: I experience high quality care and support that is right for me.
- 2: I am fully involved in all decisions about my care and support.
- 3: I have confidence in the people who support and care for me.
- 4: I have confidence in the organisation providing my care and support.
- 5: I experience a high-quality environment if the organisation provides the premises.

Each outcome statement is accompanied by a series of evidence based descriptions and the full document can be accessed at [Health and Social Care Standards](#).

OUR QUALITY STATEMENT

As set out in the South Ayrshire Integration Joint Board Strategic Plan 2021-2031 our wider strategic priorities include

'We work together to give you the right care in the right place'

'We help to build communities where people are safe'

'We are an ambitious and effective Partnership'

In order to achieve these priorities, we have committed to improving our approach to Quality Assurance and continuous service improvement.

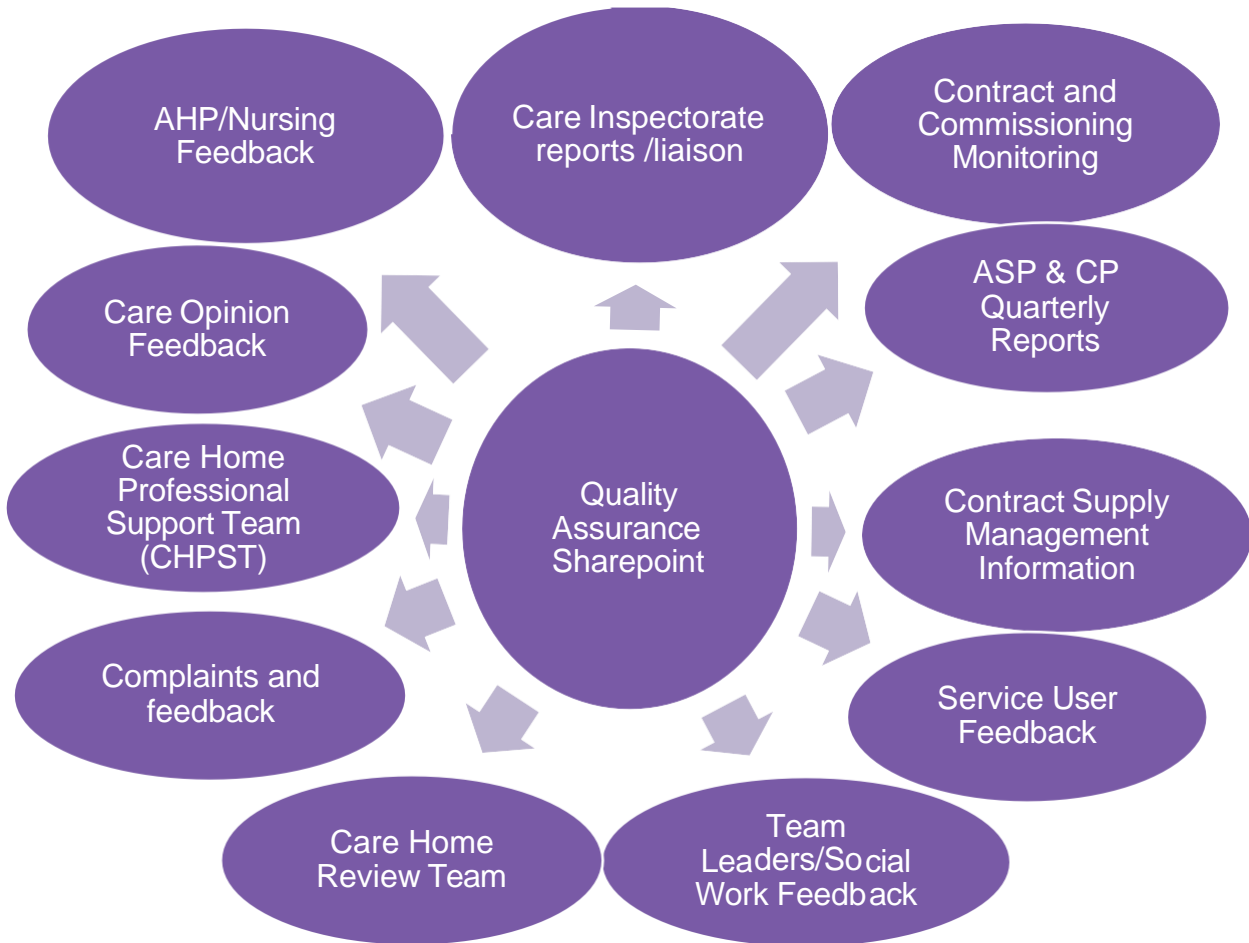
Our quality statement of intent is:

We consider the delivery of high-quality social care and support as a shared objective that can be best achieved by all stakeholders working together. Stakeholders include people who access services, relatives, carers, social care providers, staff delivering the service, social work staff, health colleagues, safeguarding professionals and regulatory bodies including the Care Inspectorate. Our approach will be transparent and focussed on delivering consistently high standards of care and support. We are commitment to collaborative practice and engagement with all our commissioned services, rebuilding our provider forum and having a whole system focus on continuous improvement.

HOW WE GATHER QUALITY ASSURANCE DATA

There are currently several ways in which we receive information and feedback about our commissioned services. We will improve how we co-ordinate the information we currently receive and we will create an information hub on our SharePoint site in a designated file for each commissioned service. SharePoint is a secure online database that can be used to store, organise and share data and is subject to controlled access. The data we will hold will include inspection reports and both qualitative and quantitative feedback gathered from a range of sources. Having this data on SharePoint will enable us to analyse the information available with the focus being on both the efficient and effective delivery of care and support by all our commissioned services.

The sources of information we will utilise to gather intelligence will include:



OVERVIEW OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Care Inspectorate Reports/Liaison	As the regulatory body for all care services, we will work in partnership with the Care Inspectorate. This will include regular sharing of information, reports from annual inspections and improvement plans as well as collaboration around complaints or any other relevant business.
Contract and Commissioning Monitoring	Our Contract and Commissioning Team (CCT) have a central role in applying our quality assurance function for all commissioned services. This will include utilising the data we gather and carrying out annual site visits in line with contract requirements. The CCT will focus on the quality assurance aspect of service delivery and will work closely with operational colleagues.
ASP & CP Quarterly Reports	We will collate both ASP and CP referrals for all commissioned services and use this data to highlight patterns/trends within services and take action/provide support to provide assurance that our commissioned services are operating effectively in their responsibility to both Adult and Child Protection.

Contract Supply Management Information	Contract and Supplier Management will monitor the services commissioned in South Ayrshire in accordance with the requirements of their specific contract. This role is carried out by Procurement in partnership with colleagues across the SAHSCP. The volume of monitoring will be carried out is dependent on the contract type. A balanced scorecard will be produced based on a set of Key Performance Indicators.
Service User Feedback	Central to our approach to quality assurance is direct feedback from individuals in receipt of services. At every assessment and review we gather feedback from individuals, their families and carers around services they receive. We will also build in quality assurance visits to be carried out by our own experienced social care staff to the residence of individuals in receipt of commissioned services. These visits will focus on the quality of care being provided, documentation and records and gather direct feedback.
Team Leaders/Social Work Feedback	Our social work teams regularly gather feedback from individuals, their families and carers around the quality of services being delivered. We will maintain and log this feedback for each provider to inform our approach to quality assurance.
Care Home Review Team (residential placements)	The SAHSCP has a statutory duty to review individuals who reside in a permanent residential placement. The review process provides us with feedback from the individual and their family members. This includes the quality of the care and environment being provided along with any issues/feedback raised during the review.
Complaints and feedback	Complaints, feedback and the learning from this process is key to identifying concerns/issues and improving the quality-of-service delivery. We will use this information and work with providers to ensure complaints are resolved and to embed a lessons learned approach.
Care Home Professional Support Team (residential placements)	The Care Home Professional Support Team has been set up to offer professional support to care homes across South Ayrshire. The team use a self-evaluation tool in partnership with care home managers to identify areas that they require support and/or training with a focus on improving the quality-of-service delivery. The SAHSCP will work with this team, share information and utilise feedback gathered to contribute to our overall quality assurance process
Care Opinion Feedback	The SAHSCP has invested in and will utilise the Care Opinion feedback portal. This will provide us with direct feedback from individuals and their families who currently access care at home services.
AHP/Nursing Feedback	The SAHSCP delivers health services through our Nursing and Allied Health professionals and they are often delivered alongside care and support services. We will gather feedback from these professionals and any issues around the quality of the care and support being delivered.

HOW WILL WE MONITOR DATA AND REVIEW SERVICE PROVISION

We will use our SharePoint site as a 'central hub' of intelligence providing enabling us to monitor data about each service we commission. This approach will enable us to identify any patterns or trends and maintain an overview of the quality of the care and support being delivered. The information we hold will be specific to each provider and access to the information will be granted to a cohort of officers and be in line with current data protection (GDPR) procedures.

The intelligence we gather will be accompanied by an annual quality assurance and monitoring visit carried out by our Contract and Commissioning Team.

We have adopted, what we consider to be a risk based and proportionate response with all commissioned providers having an annual quality assurance scheduled visit. If we consider it necessary, we will take a more responsive intervention to address any information/issues we receive around the quality-of-service delivery that cause us concern. In this instance, we will utilise the relevant internal governance arrangements and liaise with any other relevant colleagues and contact the commissioned service provider directly.

The table below details the services we currently commission:

Service	No. of Providers	Minimum Frequency of visits	Total number of visits
Care at Home Services	9	Annual visit	9
Care Homes	31	Annual visit	31
Adult service providers	15	Annual visit	15
Children's Service Providers	9	Annual visit	9
ADP	4	Annual visit	4
Information/advice services	8	Annual visit	8
Total	76		76 visits per year*

*The total number of visits correct at the date of policy creation and may be subject to change.

The Commissioning Team will carry out a desktop analysis of the information available to them prior to the scheduled visit. This will provide information them of any patterns/trends and these will be discussed during their visit.

The scheduled annual quality assurance visit will look at the quality-of-service delivery in line with the National Care Standards along with any contract requirements. The visit may also include a discussion around any information gathered on SharePoint or any improvements noted during a previous scheduled visit.

GOVERNANCE AND REPORTING

Our approach to improving the quality of commissioned services across the SAHSCP will be implemented within a culture of collaboration, transparency and shared learning. We are committed to working with all our commissioned services to ensure the delivery of high-quality social care provision across the SAHSCP. The information we gather around commissioned services will be regularly shared with the relevant managers across both Adult and Children's services in line with our internal governance arrangements.

The specific governance arrangements for adult services will be carried out through the Care Home Oversight Group (CHOG). This group will provide a forum to discuss and coordinate the information/intelligence gathered from this quality assurance framework. The governance role of the CHOG will include receiving feedback and agreeing on recommendations or improvement objectives recorded in the monitoring visits. This group will also provide relevant input in the form of advice and guidance as part of their governance role.

Children's services have appointed a designated **service manager** who will be the liaison with the Contract and Commissioning Team. They will provide both advice and support along with a direct link to the broader governance arrangements within Children's Services.

The Quality Officer will produce an annual report covering all quality assurance activity including feedback and learning and this will be presented at relevant internal governance meetings.

ESCALATION PROCESS

This Quality Assurance process has been set up to provide assurance to the SAHSCP around the delivery of commissioned services. If there are risks and/or issues identified that are not resolved and are directly impacting on the quality of service delivery, the escalation process is as follows:

In some instances, an operational response may be required to support services where high risks or specific issues have been identified. Should this arise, the following steps describe how to manage a proportionate and appropriate response:

1. The service at risk is declared and agreed at the Care Home Oversight Group or the relevant manager in Children's services is fully informed.
2. The Head of Service appoints a Lead Operational Manager and they meet and formulate a broad first steps plan. Such a plan could be for an LSI as well as an operational plan around managing the immediate risk which could involve offering direct support to the identified service.
3. The Lead Operational Manager will be responsible for identifying and organising any additional supports required with support from the Head of Service. It is recognised that such supports may come from across the services.
4. Throughout any process relevant plans and updates should be given to the CHOG or the **relevant service manager** in Children's Services which will allow oversight from all other stakeholders.

5. Following any such escalation appropriate debriefing and reflection should be carried out to evaluate what when well and any lessons learned where we can make improvements and the learning shall be shared with all stakeholders.

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